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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Commission on Hispanic Affairs responds to WASL Test Item
that stereotypes Hispanics**

OLYMPIA – March 22, 2007 – It has come to the attention of the Washington Commission on Hispanic Affairs, and confirmed by staff at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) that one of the items on the 10th grade WASL stereotypes Hispanics. The item is offensive, marginalizes Hispanics, and reinforces the concerns that have been expressed by many members of the state's communities of color regarding cultural competency and cultural relevancy.

The Commission is devastated that this item was included in the student assessment. We are particularly concerned about the Hispanic students who were exposed to this item and the treatment they will receive from their non-Hispanic peers who might construe the item as an opportunity to reinforce stereotypes. Additionally, others may interpret this item in a way that limits their expectations of Hispanic students.

The Commission has requested immediate removal of the item and any other item of similar inference from the WASL test. We have also requested that OSPI launch an immediate investigation to examine the process that led to this disappointing oversight and to take the necessary steps to correct it as soon as possible.

The Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs (CHA) was created by a Governor's Executive Order and established in statute in 1971. As mandated by the state legislature, the Commission's functions are to improve public policy development and the delivery of government services to the Hispanic/Latino community.

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